



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

Steven L. Beshear, Governor

Leonard K. Peters, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Lynn True
502-564-4496

Division of Forestry Sends Second Round of Firefighters South *Crews Head to Georgia to Assist with Wildland Fires*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 21, 2011) The Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF) is sending additional personnel and equipment to assist with the current wildfire emergency in the south. Eleven division employees, comprising an engine strike team will report to Waycross, Georgia on Tuesday. The engine strike team consists of five type VI engines (4-wheel drive pickup trucks with 200-gallon water tanks and foam capabilities), 10 firefighters and 1 strike team leader. The crews are being sent in addition to 11 KDF firefighters who reported to Florida last week.

The Georgia Forestry Commission requested the additional assistance from KDF through the Southeastern Interstate Forest Fire Protection Compact. Crews will be assigned to the Sweat Farm Again Fire that started June 15 and has burned in excess of 2,000 acres of state and private land. At the time of the request, the fire was not contained and was threatening 160 homes in the community with a population of 500.

Crews sent to Florida are currently assisting with the Espanola Fire – a 5,000-acre fire in Flagler County.

KDF Director and Kentucky State Forester Leah MacSwords said the deployment for both crews should last up to two weeks. "Kentucky has been a member of the southern area forest fire protection compact since it was established in the early 1950s and we are more than happy to share resources when we are able."

Member states help each other to the extent they can, depending on their own wildfire status, according to KDF. Division staff will be on compact detail for 14 days plus travel days, and the receiving state will reimburse KDF for all personnel and equipment costs.

Forestry officials encourage public land managers, landowners and homeowners to help prevent wildfires during all times of the year. For information about fire

prevention, please visit <http://forestry.ky.gov> or contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry office at 502-564-4496.

###